

CLAIMS

What is Claimed is:

1. An electronic message delivery system for use in an e-mail network comprising a sending e-mail server and a destination e-mail server, wherein e-mail 5 messages comprising e-mail message data may be delivered from the sending e-mail server to the destination e-mail server via an electronic message delivery path, the system comprising:

(a) a stored user profile, associated with a user to whom an e-mail message is addressed, having detection parameters for processing e-mail message data;

10 (b) a processor for processing the e-mail message data and configured to identify suspect e-mail messages according to the detection parameters in the user profile; and

(c) a web page accessible by the user to set the detection parameters.

15 2. A system according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to store but not deliver the suspect e-mail messages.

3. A system according to claim 2, wherein another web page is accessible by the user to inspect the suspect e-mail messages.

4. A system according to claim 3, where the web page to set the detection parameters is the same web page as the web page to inspect the suspect e-mail messages.

5. A system according to claim 1, further comprising an intermediate pre-processing service associated with the processor and configured to receive the e-mail message data, the processor configured to identify the suspect e-mail messages simultaneously with the receiving of the e-mail message data by the intermediate pre-processing service.

10 6. A system according to claim 5, where the processor is comprised within the intermediate pre-processing service.

15 7. A system according to claim 5, wherein the intermediate pre-processing service is inserted into the electronic message delivery path by changing a Domain Name System entry containing an IP address of the destination e-mail server to contain an IP address of the intermediate pre-processing service.

20 8. A system according to claim 5, wherein a web page is accessible by an operator or agent of the destination e-mail server or a gateway to cause the intermediate pre-processing service to be inserted into the electronic message delivery path.

9. A system according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to identify a media part of the suspect e-mail messages and substitute different electronic content for the media part.

5 10. A system according to claim 9, wherein the different electronic content is derived from the media part.

11. A system according to claim 9, wherein the different electronic content is descriptive of the media part.

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12. A system according to claim 9, further comprising, in response to a user action, delivering at least a portion of the media part.

13. A system according to claim 1, wherein the detection parameters are
15 selected from the group consisting of:

content filtering parameters;

virus detection parameters; and

e-mail source and destination filtering parameters.

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14. A method of providing electronic messaging service in an e-mail network comprising a sending e-mail server and a destination e-mail server, wherein e-mail messages comprising e-mail message data may be delivered from the sending e-mail server to the destination e-mail server via an electronic message delivery path, the 5 method comprising:

- (a) storing a user profile, associated with a user to whom an e-mail message is addressed, having detection parameters;
- (b) processing the e-mail message data to identify suspect e-mail messages

10 according to the detection parameters in the user profile; and

- (c) accessing a web page by the user to establish the detection parameters.

15. A method according to claim 14, wherein the processing further 15 comprises storing but not delivering the suspect e-mail messages.

16. A method according to claim 15, wherein the accessing further comprises accessing a web page by the user to inspect the suspect e-mail messages.

17. A method according to claim 16, where accessing a web page to inspect the suspect e-mail messages comprises accessing the web page used to set the detection parameters.

5 18. A method according to claim 14, further comprising receiving the e-mail message data with an intermediate pre-processing service, wherein the processing further comprises processing the e-mail message data to identify the suspect e-mail messages simultaneously with the receiving of the e-mail message data by the intermediate pre-processing service.

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19. A method according to claim 18, wherein the processing is comprised within the intermediate pre-processing service.

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20. A method according to claim 18, further comprising receiving the e-mail message data with an intermediate pre-processing service inserted into the electronic message delivery path by changing a Domain Name System entry containing an IP address of the destination e-mail server to contain an IP address of the intermediate pre-processing service.

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26. A method according to claim 18, further comprising accessing a web page by an operator or agent of the destination e-mail server or a gateway to insert the intermediate pre-processing service into the electronic message delivery path.

5 22. A method according to claim 14, wherein the processing further comprises processing the e-mail message data to identify a media part of the suspect e-mail messages and substitute different electronic content for the media part.

10 23. A method according to claim 22, wherein the different electronic content is derived from the media part.

24. A method according to claim 22, wherein the different electronic content is descriptive of the media part.

15 25. A method according to claim 22, further comprising, in response to a user action, delivering at least a portion of the media part.

26. A method of providing electronic messaging services in an e-mail network comprising a sending e-mail server and a destination e-mail server, wherein e-mails may be delivered from the sending e-mail server to the destination e-mail server via an electronic message delivery path, the method comprising:

5 (a) inserting an intermediate pre-processing service into the electronic message delivery path by changing a Domain Name System entry containing an IP address of the destination e-mail server to contain an IP address of the intermediate pre-processing service, the intermediate pre-processing service storing a user profile having detection parameters for processing e-mail message data, the user profile associated

10 with a user to whom an e-mail message is addressed;

(b) receiving in the intermediate pre-processing service e-mail message data addressed to the destination e-mail server that has been routed to the intermediate pre-processing service, the user profile accessible through a web page by the user to set the detection parameters; and

15 (c) simultaneously with receiving the e-mail message data in the intermediate pre-processing service, processing the e-mail message data to identify suspect e-mail messages according to the detection parameters, and, if the processing instructs delivery to the destination e-mail server, delivering the e-mail message data to that server.

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27. A method according to claim 26, wherein less than all of the e-mail message comprising the e-mail message data is delivered to the destination e-mail server according to the processing done at the intermediate pre-processing service.

5 28. A method according to claim 26, wherein the processing comprises multicasting at least a portion of the e-mail message to destinations specified in the user profile.

10 29. A method according to claim 28, wherein different portions or versions of the e-mail message are delivered to different destinations.

30. A method according to claim 29, wherein the destinations include at least one wireless device.

15 31. A method according to claim 26, wherein processing the e-mail message data is selected from the group consisting of:
content filtering;
virus detection; and
e-mail source and destination filtering.

32. A method according to claim 26, further comprising identifying suspect e-mail messages and storing but not delivering the suspect e-mail messages.

5 33. A method according to claim 26, further comprising a user accessing a server to inspect suspect e-mail messages addressed to the user.

10 34. A method according to claim 26, wherein the stored user profile describes the preferences of a user who is an end user of the electronic messaging services.

15 35. A method according to claim 26, further comprising accessing a web page by an operator or agent of the destination e-mail server or a gateway to cause the intermediate pre-processing service to be inserted into the electronic message delivery path.

36. A method according to claim 26, wherein the processing includes delivering at least one e-mail message comprising the e-mail message data to one or more wireless network gateways.

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37. A method according to claim 26, wherein the processing includes identifying a media part of the e-mail message data and substituting different electronic content for the media part.

5 44. A method according to claim 37 wherein the different electronic content is derived from the media part.

39. A method according to claim 44, wherein the different electronic content is descriptive of the media part.

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40. A method according to claim 44, further comprising, in response to a user action, delivering at least a portion of the media part.

41. A method according to claim 26, wherein the intermediate pre-15 processing service accepts a connection from a sending SMTP server, and simultaneously with the receiving of e-mail message data over that connection opens a connection to a receiving SMTP server.

42. A method according to claim 26, wherein the method is accomplished in the intermediate pre-processing service without providing standard mail server software in the intermediate pre-processing service.

5 43. A method according to claim 26, wherein processing the e-mail message data further comprises processing the e-mail message data with the intermediate pre-processing service.

44. An electronic message delivery system for use in an e-mail network comprising a sending e-mail server and a destination e-mail server, wherein e-mails may be delivered from the sending e-mail server to the destination e-mail server via an electronic message delivery path, the system comprising:

5 (a) an intermediate pre-processing service configured to be inserted into the electronic message delivery path by changing a Domain Name System entry containing an IP address of the destination e-mail server to contain an IP address of the intermediate pre-processing service;

10 (b) e-mail message data addressed to the destination e-mail server received by the intermediate pre-processing service, the intermediate pre-processing service having a stored user profile, associated with a user to whom an e-mail message is addressed, having detection parameters for processing the e-mail message data and being accessible through a web page by the user to set the parameters; and

15 (c) a processor associated with the intermediate pre-processing service for processing the e-mail message data simultaneously with the receiving of the e-mail message data by the intermediate pre-processing service to identify suspect e-mail messages according to the detection parameters in the user profile, the e-mail message data delivered to the destination e-mail server if the processing of the e-mail message data instructs delivery to that server.

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45. A system according to claim 44, wherein the processor is located within the intermediate pre-processing service.

46. A system according to claim 44, wherein the processor is configured to deliver less than all of the e-mail message comprising the e-mail message data to the destination e-mail server according to the processing.

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47. A system according to claim 44, wherein the processor is configured to multicast at least a portion of the e-mail message to destinations specified in the user profile.

10 48. A system according to claim 47, wherein different portions or versions of the e-mail message are delivered to different destinations.

49. A system according to claim 48, wherein the destinations include at least one wireless device.

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50. A system according to claim 44, wherein the detection parameters are selected from the group consisting of:

content filtering parameters;

virus detection parameters; and

e-mail source and destination filtering parameters.

51. A system according to claim 44, wherein the processor is further configured to identify suspect e-mail messages and store but not deliver the suspect e-mail messages.

52. A system according to claim 51, further including a web page accessible by a user to inspect suspect e-mail messages addressed to the user.

10 53. A system according to claim 52, wherein the web page accessible to inspect suspect e-mails is the same as the web page accessible to set the detection parameters.

15 54. A system according to claim 44, wherein the stored user profile describes the preferences of a user who is an end user of the system.

20 55. A system according to claim 44, further comprising a web page accessible by an operator or agent of the destination e-mail server or a gateway to cause the intermediate pre-processing service to be inserted into the electronic message delivery path.

56. A system according to claim 44, wherein the processor is further configured to deliver at least one e-mail message comprising the e-mail message data to one or more wireless network gateways.

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57. A system according to claim 44, wherein the processor is further configured to identify a media part of the e-mail message data and substitute different electronic content for the media part.

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58. A system according to claim 57, wherein the different electronic content is derived from the media part.

59. A system according to claim 58, wherein the different electronic content is descriptive of the media part.

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60. A system according to claim 58, wherein the processor is further configured to deliver at least a portion of the media part in response to a user action.

61. A system according to claim 44, wherein the intermediate pre-processing service is further configured to accept a connection from a sending SMTP server and,

simultaneously with the receiving of e-mail message data over that connection, open a connection to a receiving SMTP server.

62. A system according to claim 44, wherein the processor is configured to

5 process the e-mail message data without providing standard mail server software in the intermediate pre-processing service.